



Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
www.iowadnr.gov

www.iowanaturestore.com

Editor: Mick Klemesrud, 515/281-8653
mick.klemesrud@dnr.state.ia.us

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SNOW MAY SLOW ICE GROWTH

CLEAR LAKE - Ice anglers have welcomed the recent cold weather with open arms. The sub-zero temperatures across the state had frozen many Iowa lakes, but the accompanying snow cover may have prevented significant ice growth and hidden potential weak areas.

“Use your good judgement when heading out and avoid any areas that do not look right,” said Mick Klemesrud with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “Avoid off-colored snow or dark spots in the snow which could be weak spots in the ice. Cut a lot of test holes to check ice thickness. A good rule of thumb is to follow other footsteps when going out.”

Another factor anglers should be aware is, with the mild winter, a large population of waterfowl has stayed in Iowa and has kept areas on many lakes from freezing. When the temperatures plunged, these areas may have only recently frozen and will be hidden beneath the new snow. Snow acts as a blanket, insulating the ice from the cold temperatures and slowing or preventing growth.

Anglers planning to venture out should check the ice thickness often. Ice thickness is not uniform on any body of water. According to the DNR fisheries office in Clear Lake, lakes in northern Iowa are reporting between 5 and 8 inches of ice.

Never assume ice is safe. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources follows the general guidelines tabulated by the Lumbermen’s Safety Association and other sources.

One inch of ice is not safe. Two inches of ice can support one person on foot, under good conditions. Three inches of ice can support a group in single file or spread out. Four inches supports general use. Five inches for snowmobiles.

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TROUT STOCKING AT SUMMERSET POSTPONED AGAIN

INDIANOLA – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will postpone stocking trout at SummerSet State Park until ice conditions improve, or open water conditions are present. Presently, ice conditions does not support fishing.

The DNR will continue to monitor the ice conditions. The earliest trout could be stocked is the week of Jan. 22. The DNR has plans to stock about 1,600 catchable sized rainbow trout in the South Lake.

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SURF THE INTERNET FOR TREES THIS SPRING

A new, convenient and reliable source for information on tree planting is now available on the Internet at www.iowatreeplanting.com.

“Iowatreeplanting.com is a one stop source of information for people who want to plant hundreds of trees on their acreage or one tree in their yard,” said John Walkowiak, chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources forestry bureau. “Iowatreeplanting.com promotes using native trees and shrubs for conservation and landscaping purposes and has a complete listing of Iowa’s native woody plants, along with a complete listing of Iowa public and private nursery sources.”

Information on iowatreeplanting.com was developed by foresters and state biologists and includes tips on creating wildlife habitat and protecting water quality. The site includes information on how to plant and care for new trees. The website will continue to add practical landscape and habitat designs people can use.

“Most nurseries operate on a first come first served basis so those who wait until the last minute to plan their plantings may find a limited selection of trees available,” Walkowiak said. “Start planning now and investigate plant availability and prices and www.iowatreeplanting.com is a perfect place to start.”

For more information, contact Walkowiak at 515-242-5966.

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EVERGREEN UP YOUR LANDSCAPE

AMES - Adapted pines, spruces, firs and even junipers provide a little green color to Iowa's long and brown winter landscape. Evergreens, or more accurately "conifers," since they are cone bearing, not only make our landscape green, they provide critical winter wildlife habitat, offer protection from cold strong winds and increase property value.

But what conifer is right for your landscape or acreage? First, keep in mind that except for bald cypress, most conifers adapted to Iowa's climate and soils like dry, well-drained sites. Second, most conifers though they start out small, grow large and need space at least 15 to 25 feet from your home, other trees and overhead power lines. Finally, during their first year, conifers need lots of TLC with regular watering until their roots take hold, right up to the time the ground freezes.

Pines well adapted to Iowa include the native white pine, but also its long-needled cousin, the red pine, and its short needled cousin, jack pine. Scotch pine, still Iowa's favorite Christmas tree, generally has a short life span of 25 to 30 years due to pine wilt.

Spruces possess four-sided needles with dense pyramidal shapes and are great for windbreaks and shelterbelts as well as providing dense nest and hiding cover for wildlife. Iowa foresters recommend adapted Norway and white spruce for conservation plantings and Black Hills spruce for ornamental sites. Colorado blue spruce is no longer recommended by foresters due to needle blight diseases that shorten its lifespan.

Junipers or cedars, such as the native red cedar, possess scale-like needles and reach 25 to 30 feet tall on a variety of soils. Although they grow wild in many parts of the state, red cedar is wonderful shelterbelt tree due to its dense foliage.

For information on "ever greening" your landscape or acreage, contact the State Forest Nursery at 1-800-865-2477 or online at www.iowadnr.com/forestry/. The nursery has sells conifer seedlings for \$25 to \$30 per 100 plants with a minimum order of 500. A smaller "create-a-wildlife packet" is available with up to four different species for a total of 200 plants and sells for \$90. The nursery has good supplies of eight to 24-inch tall bare root conifers available for spring delivery. VISA and MasterCard are accepted.

Check out www.iowatreeplanting.com for local nursery and garden centers that offer conifers adapted for your landscape.

For more information, contact Roger Jacob, manager of the State Forest Nursery, at 1-800-865-2477.

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